

## Violet's Tale

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Category: Legion of Super Heroes  
Language: English  
Characters: Lightning Lass/Light Lass/Ayla R., Shrinking Violet/Virus/Salu D.  
Status: Completed  
Published: 1999-09-16 09:00:00  
Updated: 1999-09-16 09:00:00  
Packaged: 2016-04-27 10:42:38  
Rating: T  
Chapters: 1  
Words: 2,949  
Publisher: [www.fanfiction.net](http://www.fanfiction.net)  
Summary: Shrinking Violet writes about her life. Non-explicit f/f romantic relationship. [Vi/Ayla]

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by 'rith (Kerithwyn Jade, [kerithwyn@yahoo.com](mailto:kerithwyn@yahoo.com))

Archive: Ask, and ye shall receive. Warnings: Character reflection. F/F romantic relationship, non-explicit. If this concept disturbs you, read no further. This relationship is in canon. (See the meta below for notes.) Rating: PG-13. Fandom: Legion of Super-Heroes, the 30th century, pre-Zero Hour. Yeah, the old continuity. No knowledge of the characters required, but a meta follows the story for those interested in knowing more. Summary: Shrinking Violet writes about her life. {Legion readers: Set shortly after "The Universo Project."} Disclaimer: All characters property of DC Comics. What I have done with them is mine.

> Dear Diary, <p>

Ick. I didn't even write that as a kid.

The shrink ordered me to keep a journal, so here I am. Yeah, "shrink." Surprise! Even Legionnaires need psychological help sometimes, or so they tell me. (There's a really bad pun in there, too: a shrink for Violet. Yeah, I'm laughing.) On second thought, though, looking around *this* group, it's surprising more of us aren't in a nuthatch somewhere. I mean, who volunteers for this kind of life: supervillains everywhere you go, galactic crises everyone expects *you* to solve, and the threat of death or worse at every turn?

Well, me, for one. I did, a lifetime ago-left Imsk to join the Legion of Super-Heroes, the most glamorous and exciting group of heroes in the United Planets. Nass, I was young! Shy as a mouse, a real "shrinking violet" in personality as well as name. But even then I knew I didn't fit among the tubes and the tinys, so when I heard about the Legion I just packed up and left to try out. Pretty brave, I guess, considering I'd never even been out of my own \*city,\* never mind off-planet.

In those early days, even my power was cool, so they took me in. It wasn't that I had somehow proven myself better suited for the Legion than any other Imskian, I was just the one who got there first. But I \*was\* better than average-I could shrink to the microscopic levels few others dared. The truth is, it wasn't because I had practiced out of pride or dedication; it was because I'd been seeking a place to hide. On overcrowded Imsk, \*space\* is the most valued commodity, not food or shelter or anything else. A place to be alone. And I'd found mine, deep in the molecules.

In the Legion I found something even better: somewhere to hide in plain sight. That became even easier as the Legion grew and gained members. Sure, I made myself useful-on lots of missions, and with the Espionage Squad. I even got myself the expected boyfriend in Ord Quelu, "Duplicate Boy" of the Heroes of Lallor. The fact that he lived light years away and we only talked maybe once every couple of months didn't matter. Like so many other things, it's all in the appearance-Shrinking Violet had a boyfriend like the rest of the Legionnaire girls, and all was right in the galaxy. We barely knew each other, so I guess it was nice of him to come looking for me when...

But that's jumping ahead.

So I did my part for the Legion. Didn't embarrass myself too badly, didn't even get taken hostage too often. Solved a few cases with the Squad and took down a couple of bad guys-the weaker ones, of course, but who's counting? It was all a team effort.

And then some radicals from my homeworld decided they wanted to break away from the United Planets, and they needed UP secrets to do it. And who better to torture those secrets out of than the most famous Imskian of all: Shrinking Violet of the Legion of Super-Heroes? It didn't help that the fanatics were goaded on by my "nemesis" Micro Lad-what a joke! Like the fact that we were both Imskian made us automatic enemies. But he hated me because I was in the Legion and he wasn't, and his little revenge scheme just happened to fit in with the terrorists' ideas, so...

So they kidnapped me, and replaced me with the Durlan shapeshifter Yera, and none of my teammates noticed. For nearly a whole year.

Yeah, \*there's\* that anger my shrink tells me I need to express. Well, hell-I barely \*had\* any personality then, so it's no wonder that Durlan bitch took my place so easily. Guess I'd learned to hide so well, even those who supposedly knew me best didn't know me at all.

Eventually \*someone\* noticed the difference, mostly because "Violet" had taken up with Colossal Boy, when all those years I'd shown no

interest in Gim's obvious affections. Why not? Gim's nice enough, and he was \*there,\* unlike Ord-which maybe was the problem. Maybe my subconscious was telling me something, even then. Duplicate Boy guessed that something was up, but when he came to confront "Violet," he gave up on her-gave up on \*me\*- way too easy when she said she loved Colossal Boy rather than him. That moron! He \*knew\* something was wrong, but he didn't bother to tell anyone. Some caring "boyfriend," huh?

But Element Lad figured it out, and he and Brainiac 5 and Cham found me and pulled me out of the sens-deprivation tank. I was a real mess-physically, emotionally, the works. They packed me off to Medicus One, the terrorists were captured, another case successfully concluded.

Except for the consequences. While she was being me, Gim had \*married\* Yera, and he chose to stay married to her. Guess the imitation Violet was better than the real thing, plus in the end he got all those rumored "benefits" of being intimate with a shapeshifter. At least someone got something out of the whole sorry episode.

Well, I did too. Something changed while I was in that tank, something in me. I spent some time in rehab, left too soon for Dr. Gym'll liking, and came back to the Legion-where else was I gonna go? But I came back \*better.\* Stronger, more assertive, nobody's little Violet anymore. I burned my old clothes and my old attitudes, and started over.

I could see some of the other Legionnaires didn't much like the change. I didn't much care. Despite everything the Legion was still a better place to be than any other-I wasn't going back to Imsk, that's for damn sure-so I set out to make myself more effective. I started working out regularly, and now I'm in better physical shape than I've ever been-better than any of the other women, and half of the men on the team. Some of them depend on their powers way too much. I practiced with the battle holos until my rankings in physical combat were surpassed only by Val's record, and he \*was\* Karate Kid, after all.

I guess I was looking for something else, though, because at one point I "put the moves on" Sun Boy, as Thom called it. Right in public. I don't know \*what\* I was thinking, except maybe that I wanted to see what would happen, and Dirk was available? Dirk Morgna, the Legion's famous playboy, lusted after by millions of women. Great choice there, huh? Except maybe in a way it was, because he was...kind. We were only together for a couple of weeks-not even a relationship, really, just some fun when the mood struck. I think Dirk realized that I was experimenting, learning about my new self, and he was more than willing to help! Phantom Girl thinks he's just a sexist pig, but he was a lot more gentle and understanding than she gives him credit for. If she wasn't joined at the hip so tightly to Ultra Boy, I'd have said she was jealous. Anyway, it ended and we stayed friends, and that was that.

And then there was Ayla.

Okay, better back up a bit. Ayla Ranzz, better known as Lightning Lass, or Light Lass when she had her antigrav powers. Twin sister of Lightning Lad and also known for her long relationship with Timber

Wolf, another of the Legion's famous romances. Saturn Girl and Lightning Lad, Phantom Girl and Ultra Boy, Shadow Lass and Mon-El, Light Lass and Timber Wolf-to the tabloids, we looked more like a dating service than a team.

The Legion lost Ayla for a time, when she left after the Darkseid affair. Timber Wolf lost her when he refused to go with her, or even offer his support when \*she\* needed it after all the times she helped him. What a jerk. But hey, his loss, my gain. She went back to Winath and was there for a couple of months before her insane brother, Lightning Lord, came looking for her. You want crazy? Mekt's \*certifiable.\* He came after her so she could be his twin-he doesn't have one, unlike most Winathians. Like I said, nuts. Somehow she got her lightning power back when he attacked her, and once she'd taken care of him she decided to come back to the Legion.

She'd changed, too. Maybe it was the difference in powers, or just the time spent away from the team. Ayla was stronger, more assertive, definitely more willing to use her powers to put the fear into the Legion's enemies. Garth sure never used his powers as aggressively-not when he was stable, anyway. When she came back, Lightning Lass suddenly ranked among the more powerful Legionnaires, rather than one of the weaker ones. It's funny (or maybe not) how the female Legionnaires tended to have the lesser powers, with the exception of Supergirl and maybe Saturn Girl, in her own way. Oh, and Sensor Girl, the "upgraded" Princess Projectra. But Ayla took her place among the Legion powerhouses, and she's kept it.

So we became friends, really for the first time. Shrinking Violet and Light Lass had been friends, more or less, but not close-I hadn't let anyone get that close. We were put together on a couple of missions, and I noticed her new attitude, and I guess she noticed mine. We started talking, then spending off-duty hours together, and that was...nice. I mean, \*really\* nice. Just having someone I could talk to about everything was a real gift. Maybe it sounds silly, but I'd never had that kind of friend before, someone I trusted.

Time and the Legion went on. Ayla and I were spending most of our time together, and I was having a great time. I didn't want to go to sleep, because I couldn't wait to see her over breakfast in the morning, or take a run around the gym with her, or even take out a few lowlifes on the same mission. One morning as we were heading out of the HQ, I heard myself saying, "Anyway, Ayla, I found this spectacular spot for waterfall diving, perfect for a few days away from Metropolis!"

And I realized.

A couple of days. Alone with Ayla. Swimming-probably naked, because Ayla doesn't wear swimsuits if she can avoid it; she thinks they're silly. Camping out. Alone with her...at night...

I freaked.

Quietly, of course. I suddenly "remembered" another errand and ran off, shaking. Tough ol' Vi, terrified because she'd suddenly realized she was in love with her best friend. No big deal, right? Except unlike most of the known galaxy, Imsk held onto some really ancient attitudes, and I'd been raised there. Before, it wouldn't have even \*occurred\* to me to look at another woman that way. But I'd changed,

and suddenly anything was possible.

Out of desperation, I went to talk to Dirk. Like I said, we were still friends, and he knew some of what I'd been through. I managed to stammer it out and he said, "So? What's the problem?"

I said, "But...she's..."

He sat me down and said, "Vi, listen up. Do you love her?"

What do they say? "The truth will out?" "I...yeah, I do."

Dirk said, "Then that's great. And you should tell her, before she gets tired of waiting to hear it. What are you afraid of?"

Put that way, it seemed so obvious.

Later, I called Ayla and we made plans for the trip. I kept wondering about what Dirk had said--was she waiting? Did she know? Did she \*want\* me to say something?

I meant to find out, but I just couldn't find the words. The setting was perfect: sun, water, blue sky and green everywhere. I was cursing myself for a coward as we picnicked near the waterfall. Every time I looked up, I met those blue eyes of hers and my mouth went dry.

I know now, because she's told me, that Ayla \*was\* waiting for me to come to terms with my feelings. She didn't want to force the issue, because she knew I was still working it all out in my head. Things probably would have stayed that way--me not knowing how to say it, Ayla not wanting to push--if we hadn't fallen asleep after lunch, over the picnic baskets. If it hadn't been for Universo.

Huh. Never thought I'd owe \*Universo\* anything. One of our greatest enemies, and he gave me the most important gift of my life.

Universo had put everyone on the entire \*Earth\* to sleep, and when we woke we were in \*his\* world. Everything was the same, mostly, except the Legion was disbanded and he was in charge, thanks to his hypnotic powers. Peaceful, really. Dictatorships usually are, at least until the dictator stops being benevolent. We ex-Legionnaires were on call to the government and local law enforcement, whenever they needed our powers. Otherwise, we were free to do and live as we wanted on generous "retirement" packages. And I was living with Ayla like we'd been lovers for years. If it all hadn't been a lie, I could have been happy for the rest of my life. But I've had enough of lies, even those I used to tell myself.

That went on for weeks and might have lasted for months if Saturn Girl and some of the others hadn't fought their way free of the hypnotic conditioning, and taken Universo down.

But we \*remembered\* everything. I remembered what it had felt like to sleep next to her, her arms around me. I remembered that Ayla tastes like strawberries and sunshine, and I couldn't bear the thought of never being with her like that again.

So I went to her room, all ready to make a big speech. She opened the door, and simply said: "I missed you."

And that was that.

Here's the truth, plain and simple: I love her, and she loves me.

I've found my place, and it's with her.

Home is where Ayla is.

META

Shrinking Violet-Salu Digby of Imsk, usually called "Violet" or "Vi." Power to shrink to microscopic size. She tells her own history above, but in brief: Joined the Legion, served quietly for years. Kidnapped by Imskian radicals and held in sensory deprivation for months. This obviously had a profound effect on her personality, and she returned from rehab a much changed woman-aggressive and even abrasive, and seriously into physical fitness. Became close friends with Lightning Lass. Though Paul Levitz only hinted at the depth of their relationship, it was a given during the Giffen/Bierbaum Five Year Gap era. My only addition is the idea that Vi and Ayla got together during the events of "The Universo Project," and Vi and Dirk's conversation. IMO, Vi was always gay, but did not (or could not, due to her upbringing and personality) acknowledge the fact until the events described above.

Lightning Lass-Ayla Ranzz of Winath. Power to generate electricity, usually in the form of lightning. One of three siblings with Garth (Lightning Lad, her twin and fellow Legionnaire) and Mekt (older brother, the villain Lightning Lord). Joined the Legion during the time Lightning Lad was believed dead. Powers were changed to the ability to make objects super-light (gravity negation), and she served as Light Lass for years. Had a years-long relationship with Brin Londo (Timber Wolf), to whom she provided stability and much-needed emotional support. After the events of the Great Darkness saga, Ayla left the Legion for Winath. Brin refused to leave with her or even acknowledge her emotional distress, despite all she'd been to him. Months later, an attack by Mekt revitalized her lightning powers, and she rejoined the Legion as Lightning Lass. She quickly became friends with Vi, both having undergone significant and life-changing experiences. Like many Winathians, Ayla is cheerfully uninhibited, though she obviously prefers long-term relationships with a single partner (Brin, and now Vi). Interestingly, the Ranzz siblings present a trio of sexual preference: Ayla is bisexual, Garth seems entirely straight, and Mekt is gay. For story purposes I have ignored Ayla's flirtation with Magnetic Kid, which seemed to me a tremendous misstep in characterization on the writers' parts.

End  
file.